

## **Metropolitan Homelessness Commission Meeting**

Friday, March 20, 2015  
at the Downtown Library

Present: Megan Barry, Brady Banks, Burkley Allen, Dayna Lovelady, Steve Samra, Wendell Segroves, Phil Duke, Diane Kuhn, Charles Strobel, Ton Turner, Erik Cole, Marvin Cox, Ellen Zinkiewicz, Jim Haribson, Angie Thompson

Staff: Will Connelly, Deon Trotter, Judy, Tackett, Karri Simpson

The meeting began at 9:30 a.m.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the January 9, 2015 Metro Homelessness Commission meeting were approved.

### **Financial Report and Budget**

The operations budget is on target year to date. Next meeting the money spent for the contact with Focus Strategies will be represented.

Project Homeless Connect has \$8000 remaining in the budget.

How's Nashville has approximately \$75,000 in the budget currently, however the money is consistently being spent; if more donations aren't accrued the budget will have around \$25,000 remaining at the end of the year. There are only 97 NES gift certificates remaining; additional bus passes were recently purchased and aren't reflected in the report shown.

The CDBG grant was recently extended for another year. Prior to the extension, spending ceased on January 25.

Work under the CABHI grant has begun. Currently there are very few expenditures for the month of January, however activity will begin to pick up and reflected on upcoming reports.

In regards to the budget process, staff has an appointment with the Mayor's office in three weeks to discuss the proposal. Approximately two week after, the Mayor will propose the budget to Metro Council. The Council can change the Mayors proposal, but they generally don't. A 3% cut from current contracts was proposed.

Charlie Strobel asked where the funds for individuals with no income, who find housing, comes from. Will Connelly stated that often, since they lack income, those individuals have some type of subsidy like Section 8 or really low rent, \$50 or less. The MHC doesn't provide ongoing rental assistance, but does assist with move-in costs which includes first month's rent, security deposit, furniture, electric, etc. Ongoing assistance comes from working when they can, selling contributor, getting connected with SOAR and getting disability benefits.

Currently reasons individuals lose housing isn't being tracked; track just a few data points, because of the limited capacity of a small staff and lack of a data system. Age, family composition, experience of homelessness/vulnerability is currently tracked in regards to housing retention.

## **Contract Reports**

Commissioners had received the contract reports prior to the start of the meeting. There were no comments or questions.

## **Cold Weather Update**

Judy Tackett reported that there have been a total 26 days at level 2, seven days at level 3, and seven days at level 4. Level 4 was determined when OEM opened an emergency shelter. The different this year from last was the implementation of a Cold Weather Coordinator, Sara Lynes who was amazing. A texting system was in place that would notify what the level was each day, when beds were full at locations, and the coordinator oversaw those efforts and streamlined communication. MTA gave 250 bus cards and 185 rides were taken in February. This was a working plan and the committee is aware that there are gaps, including space for individuals with pets. Sara Lynes is working on finishing up full report and hopes to be finished by May. This winter there were no nights when there weren't enough beds!

Diane Kuhn thanked Judy for all her hard work on the development of this plan and getting everyone to the table and continuously working.

## **Director's Report**

- **How's Nashville:** Will Connelly reported that *2016 by 2016*, which is a new goal to house 2016 people by the end of 2016 recently kicked off. This is a very time-limited goal which is aligned with the federal goal to end veteran and chronic homelessness. There are about 600 veterans who need to find housing and another 1400 individuals experiencing chronic homelessness. Right now our community houses around 30 veterans a month and we need to double that to reach the goal. In order to meet the goal to end chronic homelessness, around 60-70 people need to find housing each month; currently about 45-50 individuals experiencing chronic homeless move in to housing each month. Community Solutions is helping to guide this campaign. This is not replacing How's Nashville, it is How's Nashville's next focus.
- **Strategic Planning:** Thanks to funding from FRIST foundation, MDHA, and the Commission, the strategic planning process, in partnership with Focus Strategies is very close to beginning. The overall outcome will develop a guiding document and plan for future funding, as well as Focus Strategies will recommend a new governance structure.

Will Connelly stated that he is hoping to have a kick off meeting late next month and the process from that point should last about five to seven months. Erik Cole stated that the CoC need this process to be done prior to HUD putting out the RFP for funding, usually in September or October of every year. The initial goal of the kick off meeting is to explain why this process is so important. Hope to include as many agency directors as possible within the in the community.

- **CABHI:** Cayla Wilson, with Park Center Nashville, reported that they have hired five new outreach worker and Mental Health Cooperative plans to hire two CTI case managers. As of today their team has housed four people already and are working with a total of 40 individuals. Park Center will now be providing first phase of CTI case management and then Mental Health Cooperative will take over throughout phase 2 and 3. They will be referred over at the time of a housing match.

- **Coordinated Entry and Assessment:**

There are three working groups that meet every Wednesday to develop a new CES system: a more thoughtful way people can get access to care and services when they are at risk of homelessness and or already experiencing homelessness. One group is focused on prevention and where people receive help when they are experiencing a housing crisis. The second is looking at when someone is already in the shelter system where they go for help and how to get referrals. The final group is focused on data and how to share this data. There is a lot of discussion around HMIS and what role it will play; currently there is not a lot of sharing within HMIS and so they are restarting those conversations. The “switch on” date is July 1st.

## **Other**

- **Program Evaluation Subcommittee:**

Angie Thompson reported that the Subcommittee last met on February 24th. Their charge was to see if outcomes met what contracts stated and in their due diligence learned that Metro Social Services already does a yearly review of contract compliance. In regards to making any recommendation on change, there really isn’t the data to do that. With Focus Strategies working on the strategic plan, all the work is already being done. A decision was made to suspend any future meetings of this group pending any future information that they need to act on.

- **James Robertson Apartment Update:**

Venus Allen, with Metro Social Services reported that of the 110 residents, 76 tenants have been contacted and 71 have decided to work with Metro Social Services. As of the March 9th, 40 of the 76 are in the process of moving into new housing. 31 still don’t have housing yet they are expecting that 8 individuals will located housing by the first week of April. A few new current residents have begun reaching out. Trevecca and Nashville Christian Towers have really stepped up and helped provide units to these households.

Norman from MDHA reported that there was a resource fair on February 12th and many community partners participated. They have issued 87 vouchers, 29 are moving to other subsidized housing and 4 have leased- up with an additional 8 in the process of doing so. Another 4 households ported their voucher to another county. Of the 87 vouchers issued 42 are still looking for a unit, 4 refused voucher, 3 are deceased, 11 moved to unknown destinations, and 3 are pending voucher issue.

Discussion ensued around the crisis response and the possibility of other buildings now renewing their HUD contacts.

## **Announcements**

Family Point is next Thursday. Safe Haven and Salvation Army are organizing it.

## **Public Hearing**

- Denis Huey: He is disappointed that they have not replaced JC Smith, a former Commissioner, with another veteran representative. He feels enough time has passed that this should have been handled.
- Howard Allen: He stated he lost his dental care when the Downtown Clinic became United Health. He is concerned about residents of James Robertson and where they are going to go.
- Steve Ryder: He agrees with Denis Huey’s previous statement. He thanked OEM for opening a shelter during the last cold snap. He stated that although he doesn’t know much about it he is concerned about the aggressive date to launch the CES. He wants to know more about it. He wants to see the MOU document. He felt this was an overall good meeting and he enjoyed it.

- Samuel Lester: He thanked the city for efforts made during winter and felt there was a pretty great coordinated effort, but that most working on the street still felt like there was enough effort. When city didn't open shelter it was apparent. Feels there needs to be more facilities available for couples and people with pets. In regards to couples and families there aren't enough shelters or bridge housing for when people are searching for housing and that this is become an increasing concern as more properties refuse to take section 8. He realizes that this commission isn't directly related to affordable housing but feels they should have a strong voice. Also thinks there needs to be another homeless count during fall or spring and not just in winter on coldest night.

The next full Commission meeting is on Friday, May 1, 2015 at the Sonny West Conference room.

The next Executive Committee meeting is on Tuesday, April 14 at Metro Social Services.

With no other comments, all approved and the meeting was adjourned.